



Rev. Izzy Harbin,
Transitional Associate
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Prayer

By Izzy Harbin

God of infinite,
undefinable love,
help us to embrace
a more radical love
that is always adequate...
adequate to redeem,
restore and
reconcile us
to you.
Amen.

A Conference E-Pistle

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Reflections From
The Indiana-Kentucky Conference



Nov. 21, 2016

"For deep change to happen, the drag of normalcy must be resisted and conventional wisdom doubted." (From "Earth Honoring Faith" by Larry Rasmussen)

Rasmussen used this quote to illustrate innovation and invention via great minds like Galileo or Einstein. Supporting the idea that pushing against convention promotes growth and change is easy when history provides you with the outcome. What happens when we are asked to trust, in the moment, a view that is unconventional to our own?

Jesus called us to think differently about many things: "the first shall be last and the last shall be first;" "do not repay evil for evil;" "love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you." In fact, love God, love neighbor, love self is probably the key, except that in today's context, I am not sure what constitutes love. Think about all the things that we say we love - our iPhones, Mexican food or vacationing in the Appalachians. My sense is that the word love in all of its many uses has become one of our "drags of normalcy that must be resisted."

The love of God is a mystery to me - one that captures my sense of inquisitiveness and swirls in my heart like smoke rising from a campfire. I want to believe that there is something grander about God's love than the affection that I feel for ordinary objects or places. In Isaiah 65, God speaks to the Israelite people about their return to Jerusalem and how he will restore them as a people, and restore the land to them as a joy. In verse 18a, though, he says something curious, "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating..."

I have a tendency to forget that God is in a state of ongoing creativity. We are being remade through this mysterious love of God, being redeemed, restored and reconciled at every turn, while often oblivious to God's subtle movements. Sometimes we see the blazing sun and whisper thanks, and other times we are caught in a downpour and curse the water. Both, however, are necessary for our sustainability. God's creative presence in our lives is non-negotiable. Even though we are blessed with free-

will, we actively choose what we create as part of God's kingdom here on earth. The normalcy we must resist and conventional wisdom we must doubt is that God's love is inadequate.

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Closing

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Sincerely,

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